

Message Text

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17

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9396

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOSCOW 1525

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, UR, US, CSCE

SUBJECT: EMBASSY TRAVEL

REFS: (A) MOSCOW 1331, (B) MOSCOW 0605, (C) 75 STATE UA-7356,
(D) STATE A-370, (E) STATE A-329

1. SUMMARY. EMBASSY TRAVEL SITUATION DESCRIBED REF A CONTINUES WITH SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF TRAVEL REFUSALS AND ALTERATIONS OF TRAVEL TO BOTH CLOSED AND OPEN AREAS. MFA PROTOCOL SECTION TASKED WITH MANAGEMENT OF TRAVEL-CONTROL SYSTEM CONTENDS THEY DO NOT HAVE AVAILABLE COMPARATIVE STATISTICS ON U.S.-SOVIET INTERNAL TRAVEL. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF RECENTLY RETURNED FROM VISITS TO RIGA AND VENTSPILS REPORTED THAT INTOURIST IN RIGA, AFTER FIRST CHECKING TRAVEL NOTE, WOULD ALLOW ONLY NIGHT TRAIN TRAVEL BETWEEN THOSE CITIES ALTHOUGH MORE CONVENIENT MORNING TRAIN WAS SCHEDULED. THEY ALSO INSISTED THAT TRAVEL TO JURMALA WAS "NOT POSSIBLE" ALTHOUGH IT PROVED TO BE THIRD STOP ON RIGA-VENTSPILS MILK RUN.

3. MFA PROTOCOL (VACHNADZE) INFORMED EMBASSY FEBRUARY 2 THAT PROPOSED PPO TRIP TO ALMA-ATA, IRKUTSK, YAKUTSK, KHABAROVSK COULD BE REGISTERED WITH EXCEPTION OF ALMA-ATA WHICH WAS CLOSED TEMPORARILY.

FYI KAZAKH PARTY CONGRESS BEGINS FEBRUARY 4 AND RESULTANT TIGHT
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HOTEL SITUATION MAY PROVIDE PLAUSIBLE (THOUGH UNCITED) RATIONALE

FOR THIS PARTICULAR TURNDOWN. END FYI.

4. HAVING A PRODUCTIVE DAY, VACHNADZE REFUSED CLOSED-AREA EXCEPTION REQUESTED FOR PPO TRIP TO TARTU, ESTONIA AND TURNED DOWN 48-HOUR EXCEPTION FOR TALLINN THOUGH RESCINDING THE LATTER UPON APPEAL. EMBASSY TRAVEL OFFICER OBSERVED THAT A RATHER SUBSTANTIAL IMBALANCE IN CLOSED-AREA ACCESS EXISTED BETWEEN OUR RESPECTIVE EMBASSIES IN WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW TO WHICH VACHNADZE RETORTED THAT UNFORTUNATELY MFA DID NOT HAVE AVAILABLE TO THEM COMPARATIVE STATISTICS ON U.S.- SOVIET INTERNAL TRAVEL. EMBASSY REQUESTS DEPARTMENT'S CONCURRENCE IN PROVIDING MFA WITH STATISTICS PROVIDING NUMBER OF REQUESTS, TRAVELLERS AND EXCEPTIONS REQUESTED AND DENIED DURING CY 75 (REFS B-E PLUS U.S.-SOVIET TRADE COUNCIL FIGURES WHEN AVAILABLE.)

5. EMBASSY REQUESTS DEPARTMENT REVIEW SOVIET TRAVEL FIGURES CITED REFS C AND E PERTAINING TO EXCEPTIONS DENIED AND TRIPS NOT REGISTERED IN RETALIATION FOR EMBASSY MOSCOW TURNDOWNS.

6. COMMENT. MFA'S REACTION TO SOMEWHAT MORE AGGRESSIVE EMBASSY TRAVEL PROGRAM REMAINS ONE OF ROUTINELY REFUSING CLOSED-AREA REQUESTS WHILE RESTRICTING TRAVEL TO OPEN-AREAS THROUGH COMBINATION OF UPDK RESERVATION SYSTEM AND DIRECT REFUSALS "FOR REASONS OF A TEMPORARY NATURE."

7. IN RESPONSE TO DIFFICULTIES CITED PARAS 2 AND 7 REF A, EMBASSY PROPOSES TO REGISTER ADDITIONAL EMBOFF'S SIGNATURES WITH MFA CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION SO THAT THEY MIGHT TRAVEL AS "CONSULAR OFFICERS." END COMMENT.
STOESSEL

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